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JAPAN DECIDES TO DEFEND F.I.C.

Action Taken in Face of Attacks By United States and Britain

In the face of attacks upon French Indo-China by the United States and Britain and in view of the gradual change in the attitude of the local French authorities, the Japanese Forces in French Indo-China have been obliged to defend this area single-handed against the enemy, it was announced in a statement issued by the Japanese Government yesterday. The statement declared that Japan entertains no territorial designs.

The Statement of the Japanese Government concerning Indo-China follows

(March 10, 1945)

In accordance with agreements entered with France concerning the common defense of Indo-China, Japan has consistently cooperated with the French civil and military authorities in Indo-China for the defense of the said region. More recently, however, with the development of the war situation, a gradual change has taken place in the attitude of local French authorities, so that they have come to fail to translate into action the spirit of common defense in the face of attacks upon Indo-China by America, Britain and others. The Japanese representative has from time to time urged reconsideration upon them but to no avail, so that the Japanese Forces now find themselves obliged to defend Indo-China singly against the enemy, who is pressing close upon the region. It means that for the defense of Indo-China, the Japanese Forces have resolved to attain their objective by rejecting those who are of enemy charactor but by extending assistance to such local authorities as will cooperate with Japan.

The above is a measure Japan, much against her desire, has been compelled to adopt by military necessaity and its application shall be limited to the minimum extent. It goes without saying that regarding Indo-China, Japan entertains no territorial designs, and the Japanese Government desire to declare also that they are prepared to render all possible assistance to the inhabitants of Indo-China engaged in the defense of their homeland against the invaders of Eastern Asia, and that in consonance with the principles of the Greater East Asia Joint Declaration full support shall be accorded to their long-suppressed aspiration to achieve national independence.

The Imperial Headquarters' announcement follows:

IMPERIAL HEADQUARTERS' COMMUNIQUE at 2 a.m. on March 10

In view of the fact that the joint defense of French Indo-China has eventually become impossible, due to the insincerity on the part of the French Indo-China authorities, the Japanese Forces stationed in French Indo-China have decided to eliminate all the hostile influences and to defend that country by themselves. Necessary steps for the objective were started on the night of March 9.

General Yamashita Breaks 3-Month Silence; Expresses Full Confidence in P.I. Campaign

By Y. YOSHIMURA
Of the Military Press Corps

LUZON FRONT, March 9.—It was the Japanese plan from the beginning to draw the enemy into the Luzon plain and Manila and there to destroy his forces by attacks from all directions, General Tomoyuki Yamashita, Supreme Commander of the Japanese Forces in the Philippines, told this correspondent.

The tough, confidence inspiring General declared that the Japanese operations have thus been progressing smoothly, pointing out that because of this the enemy's losses have gone beyond 70,000. "The fighting up till now," he said, breaking a 3-months' silence, "must be regarded as preliminary operations. The main operations in which the Japanese Forces in the Philippine area will manifest their true mettle will start from here on."

General Yamashita was interviewed by this correspondent in a small simple room not far from the front. In the room were a small round table with two chairs, a cup and an ashtray. Seated calmly, the General asked the correspondent, "What do you want to hear?" The great calmness of the General and his strongly-focussed eyes inspired vast confidence in the correspondent.

Asked by the correspondent whether the Japanese Forces too had not sustained considerable casualties as a result of the furious fighting, General Yamashita said that it was a fact that they were so small as to be unbelievable. "They were far smaller than we had expected," he declared. "Hacking into the ranks of the enemy is done by units expecting death, but these death bands have almost all succeeded. Because of such loyal men, I can say definitely that we will win."

The correspondent told the General that the people in Japan were probably waiting for the Imperial Forces in the Philippines to strike out in a massive counteroffensive and asked him what he thought of this. "Armies operate after seeing a chance," he replied. "They must use tactics. We will operate when we discover a chance. A massive offensive for the destruction of the enemy will also be launched. But if we see no chance we will dig in here for 10 and 20 years, repeating the bleeding of the enemy. If we absorb as many enemy forces here as possible the enemy will have no leeway to do anything else."

There will, however, inevitably be a chance for a counteroffensive soon, the General explained. "We are positioned now for anything, a frontal attack or a surprise assault. We are prepared to handle any contingency. It will be better not to worry too much over little matters."

The correspondent returned from the interview with absolute trust in the fighting General. All is well with General Yamashita in the Philippines, he felt.

EVENTS WHICH LED TO JAPAN'S ACTION

Governor-General Jean Decoux was appointed to that post as the successor to Georges Catroux, who joined the De Gaullists, from his post as commander of the French Far Eastern fleet because of his connections with Jean Darlan. Since his assumption of the post, Decoux professed to pay allegiance to Marshal Henri Petain, but with the change in the situation in the French homeland and particularly the transfer of the Vichy Government to German territory, he gradually began to show a delicate change in his attitude.

Firstly, when Marshal Petain transferred from Vichy to Belfort, Decoux issued a communique on August 20, last year, declaring that the law of February 18, 1943, giving him the power to handle all military, political and economic problems if and when communications with the homeland were severed, would now be put into effect. Decoux claimed that such an agreement had been reached with the home government previously and that he now had been granted permission to put the law into effect.

The proclamation of this law, meant that Decoux was given all powers. If a previous agreement had been reached with the Petain Government, he naturally had to continue Petain's policy, for example, a faithful adherance to joint defense with Japan was expected. Outwardly, Decoux declared that this would be so but actually that was not the case as later facts showed.

Germany, with the withdrawal of its forces from Vichy, held firmly to the policy of protecting the Vichy Government, and transferred Marshal Petain and Pierre Laval to Germany. But Government-General of French Indo-China officially published a report on August 29, which alleged that Marshall Petain and Laval had been forcibly taken to Germany and that they were unable to carry out their duties.

Since then, Governor-General Decoux and Ambassador Henri Cosme frequently expressed to the Japanese the view that the Petain Government was in fact dissolved, that the De Gaullist regime was only a provisional government, and that after all there was actually no legal government in France. They said, however, that as for themselves, they intended to maintain friendly relations with Japan and that they had no other way of going than to place themselves under a legal French Government when such a government was formed.

Although the authorities of French Indo-China said that the De Gaullist regime was a provisional government and therefore transitionary, in their internal policies they gradually began to liquidate Petain coloring and directed their efforts far more toward complying with De Gaullist will. This attitude began gradually to grow bolder and open.

The French Indo-China authorities held that the withdrawal of the German forces from France and its occupation by the Anglo-American forces constituted the "liberation of France" and planned to hold in the latter part of September prayer services for the "liberation of France" with Decoux himself attending. Ambassador Yoshizawa was invited. He, however, cautioned them against the holding of such a

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RAID BY 130 B-29's

15 Shot Down, 50 Damaged In Attack on the Capital

About 130 B-29's blind-bombed Tokyo between midnight and 2:40 a.m. yesterday, the Imperial Headquarters announced at noon yesterday. Fifteen B-29's were shot down and about 50 damaged.

The announcement of the Imperial Headquarters follows:

IMPERIAL HEADQUARTERS' COMMUNIQUE at 12 p.m. on March 10

Between midnight on March 10 to 2:40 a.m. the main force of about 130 B-29's raided the Capital and blind-bombed street quarters. Fires occurred at various quarters, as a result of the blind-bombing, but the fire at the Imperial Mews of the Imperial Household Department was brought under control by 2:55 a.m. and the fires at other places by 8 a.m.

War results known thus far follow:

Shot down: 15. Damaged about 50.

One B-29 penetrated Kyushu through Satsuma Peninsula at about 7:20 a.m. on Saturday and fled from the skies near Nobeoka by way of Nagasaki, Omura and Omuda. Another B-29 came into the skies of Tokyo by way of Hiratsuka at about 10:20 a.m. on the same day and fled eastward by way of the skies over the capital. No bomb was dropped in both occasions. They are believed to have come over for reconnaissance purposes.

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SHOICHI KAWAMURA

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THE DEFENSE OF INDO-CHINA

The Japanese Forces have taken active steps to make secure the defense of French Indo-China. With serious attacks upon that country by American, British, and possibly Chungking forces extremely imminent, it is obvious that the most effective measures are called for at this time to cope with the danger of foreign invasion.

Under the Joint Defense Agreement existing between Japan and French Indo-China, the two countries are to have cooperated in the defense of this country. But recently with the development of the war situation, particularly in Europe, the French authorities in Indo-China, reflecting the attitude of the French officials in the other French possessions in the Pacific area, have come to show a marked unwillingness to shoulder their responsibilitjes with regard to the protection of the welfare and integrity of the territory under their jurisdiction.

Japan, having consistently extended her utmost cooperation to the French authorities in Indo-China, made every effort to prevail upon them to reconsider their changing attitude but to no avail. In view of the imminence of the impending attacks, there finally was left no alternative for Japan but to assume singly the responsibility for the defense of this area. Although the officials of French Indo-China who manifest an enemy character will be prevented from hindering the necessary defense measures, such local authorities as will cooperate with Japan will be given every assistance.

It is obvious that the step which Japan has taken has been dictated by military necessity and not by any desire on the part of Japan. Acting purely from military necessity, Japan is motivated by no territorial designs. In fact Japan's action is for the express purpose of rendering all possible assistance to the inhabitants of Indo-China engaged in the defense of their homeland against alien invaders.

The French authorities, themselves representing a foreign domination over an Asiatic nation, have failed at this time of trial to rise to the height of sincere effort necessary for the effective defense of this land. Japan on the other hand, a kindred Asiatic nation which has always championed the welfare of all the peoples of East Asia, has been moved to extend her helping hand to the peoples of Indo-China who are now facing a serious danger. Such action on the part of Japan is in full consonance with the basic aims of her national policy which has been expressed in the Joint Declaration of the Greater East Asiatic Nations. Consistent with this pledge which she has made in common with the other free nations of this region, Japan is acting for the protection and welfare of all East Asia. In taking this step, Japan is moving to give full support to the long-suppressed aspiration of the peoples of Indo-China for effective defense against foreign invasion is the first prerequisite to complete liberty. Japan is demonstrating once again that the basic aim of her national policy is to aid in the liberation of the oppressed peoples of Asia from foreign domination.

EVENTS WHICH LED TO JAPAN'S ACTION

(Continued From Page 1)

meeting, with the result that the meeting was called off. But they avoided making any official declaration on cooperation with Japan, possibly in fear of the Anglo-Americans and De Gaulle.

Moreover, the French Indo-China authorities stopped the publication of expressions by Marshal Petain in newspapers, although previously that was the practise.

They gradually took away, trying not to attract attention, the statues of Marshal Petain from throughout the country.

On December 22, an ordinance by the Governor-General was issued whereby the Legion, a people's organization formed by Marshal Petain for the revival of France, was abolished and the Ancient Combatant, a veteran's organization during the time of the republic, revived.

Another ordinance was issued on January 11, whereby the Petain laws prohibiting the formation of secret societies and prohibiting the appointment of Jewish officials were abolished.

The Government-General ceased the use of official stationery with the imprint of "French State" and revived the words "Republic of France."

The ban on news dealing with De Gaulle was lifted toward the end of September, and the use of the term "Provisional Government of France" was sanctioned in practise. The papers gradually began to grow bolder and more open in regard to articles about De Gaulle.

The authorities recorded a broadcast by De Gaulle and his cabinet ministers on February 16, the Annam New Year, to the effect that "the victory of the anti-Axis was decisive," that "the French homeland was already liberated," that "the liberation of French Indo-China is near," and that "France will direct efforts toward the elevation of the Annam status."

(To Be Continued)

SOVIETS REPULSED

Defenders of Kuestrin Turn Back 17 Attacks

Domei

BERLIN, March 9.—The German defenders of Kuestrin repulsed 17 Soviet attacks on Thursday. The attacks were supported by numerous air attacks launched previously. The Soviet formations which tried to attack the town from the north were thrown back to their former lines. Another Russian formation succeeded in pushing forward from the northwest to the rim of the town. Both sides suffered casualties in the street fighting. After bringing up reserves the German forces supported by assault batteries shattered the Soviet formations. Parts of the Russians withdrew thereupon to the outskirts of the town where they were caught in the German fire. This Soviet formation is cut off from its rear communication line.

The second Baltic army of the Soviets went all out in its attempt to widen the front. Fighting once more centered east of Frauenburg where the Russians supported by large battleplane formations continued their efforts, but all these attempts were beaten off by the Germans.

The German forces are continuing their attack on either side of Lake Balaton. After having broken into the deeply staggered main fighting line of the Soviet forces they drove them out of several fortified sections of the front. The Russians brought up further reinforcements with which they launched fierce counter-attacks, but the German forces were able to hold their newly-acquired ground.

RADESCU IN REFUGE

Domei

LISBON, March 9.—The British official quarters confirmed today that General Nikolai Radescu, ex-Premier of Rumania, had taken refuge in the building of the British legation in Bucharest, the Reuter's diplomatic correspondent reported from London today. The United States and the Soviet members of the allied control commission in Bucharest and the United States and the Soviet Governments were notified of the British action, the report added.

HITLER AT FRONT

Domei

BERLIN, March 9.—Fuehrer Adolf Hitler visited the Oder front and convinced himself of the fighting spirit of the German soldiers and the German measures of the defense. The German papers are publishing pictures of the inspection tour in which the Fuehrer looks fresh and healthy.

MAIL RESTRICTION BARED

From March 9 such military mail of a private nature bound for Army Units as newspapers, magazines, books, printed matter, photographs, and parcels, will not be accepted for the present according to a decision reached by the Transportation and Communications Ministry. This arrangement limits to letters and postcards the military mail of a private nature that can be sent to Army Units.

Fuehrer's Headquarters

March 9

In Hungary German fighting groups on either side of Lake Balaton penetrated into the enemy's deeply echeloned main fighting field and threw the Soviets out of several strong fortified sectors which were held against numerous attacks by newly brought up Red Army forces.

In the Slovakian mountains grenadiers and chasseurs broke into the Soviet deployments north of Ratibor and advanced to our main fighting line.

Against Kuestrin the enemy again launched an attack from the north and south preceeded by strong artillery fire. In the outer defense zone of Stettin strong attacks by one Soviet tank army and two infantry armies broke down in heavy fighting.

In the focal point of the great defense battle in West Prussia, the enemy tank formations penetrated into our positions between Behrent and Prussisch-Stargard and gained further ground to the north. Their spearheads were halted between Karthaus and Schoeneck. More than 50 Soviet tanks were shot up in this area.

On the lower Rhine our troops in heroic fighting repulsed strong enemy attacks in the Xanten area also yesterday. In the Cologne sector the Americans succeeded in pushing back our forces to the eastern Rhine bank, while the garrison of Bonn is offering furious resistance. In the Rhine-Moselle triangle the enemy tanks gained ground particularly in the direction of the lower Moselle. Between Ahr and the western Eifel our troops are engaged in heavy defense fighting against the enemy formations pressing on the German positions chiefly from the west. Enemy forces attacking east and soutq of Trier as well as near Fraulautern collapsed under our fire.

CHUNGKING'S SHARE HIGH

Will Not Be Able to Meet Demand, Says N.Y. Paper

Domei

LISBON, March 7.—The New York Journal of Commerce in today's issue had the following to say on the position of Chungking in relation to the international currency fund, according to a dispatch from New York:

At the Bretton Woods Conference, Chungking's share in the international currency fund was fixed at $550,000,000. This is the fourth largest amount, but Chungking will be unable, at least for some time, to get the status of a full member in regard to the fund. The recognition of full membership to Chungking will have to be postponed, considering the present situation of the Chungking legal tender. Meanwhile Chungking will be treated as a conditional member.

This information was given at a public hearing held in Congress on the Bretton Woods agreement, the New York Journal of Commerce stated.

London-Chungking Wire Set

Domei

STOCKHOLM, March 8.—A direct circuit wireless connection has been established between London and Chungking handling all kinds of telegrams, says a London report.